

“Get Fresh!” Nutrition Education Video Series for WIC Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program 1998-2001 WIC Special Project Grant

The USDA awarded a WIC Special Project Grant to New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets. This 3-year grant (9/30/98 to 9/30/01) is a collaboration of the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, the New York State Department of Health, and the Division of Nutritional Sciences/Cornell Cooperative Extension, Cornell University. The project will become integrated into the ongoing program activities of the WIC Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) in New York State. Provided in the project are opportunities for WIC staff involvement in development, implementation, and evaluation. Statewide training for release of the new teaching tools is occurring in June-July 2001.

Project Goals

This project aims to increase the implementation and effectiveness of nutrition education in the WIC FMNP by creating innovative teaching tools that can be used in both WIC clinic waiting rooms and group teaching sessions. The objectives are to:

1. motivate WIC participants to use WIC FMNP benefits.
2. increase use of farmers’ markets by WIC participants, thereby supporting local agriculture.
3. increase WIC participants’ nutrition awareness through exposure to a wide variety of fresh fruits and vegetables.
4. improve dietary practices by increasing the amount and variety of fresh fruit and vegetable consumption, and by strengthening skills related to selection, storage, and preparation.
5. promote positive parent-child interactions that are related to food experiences within WIC families.
6. provide support to WIC staff for the nutrition education component of the FMNP through flexible teaching tools, training, and support.

Videos

Eight 5-minute shows were produced in both English and Spanish. Each show highlights one fruit or vegetable available at farmers’ markets. The shows are packaged on two tapes - one featuring apples, broccoli, potatoes, and winter squash, and one featuring cabbage, carrots, kale, and peaches.

Each video show includes:

- people using farmers’ market nutrition program checks at local farmers’ markets.
- food growing on farms.
- hosts giving tips for selecting, storing, and preparing the featured fruit or vegetable.
- hosts preparing nutritious recipes that are easy and fun to make.
- parents involving children in food preparation.
- families eating together.

Recipe Cards

Cards with recipes and tips were produced to accompany each video show.

Development

Nutrition messages for the video were selected and designed to make a visual imprint that viewers can recall when they visit the farmers’ market or return home. Development of the video shows and printed recipe cards was guided by production focus groups with WIC participants, and by feedback from WIC educators.

Evaluation

The project includes a series of four integrated evaluations on the design, implementation, efficacy, impact, and benefits of the video resources and their use.

An implementation evaluation involving 4 diverse WIC agencies was conducted in 1999. In 2000, the video efficacy evaluation involved five control and five intervention agencies chosen randomly from eligible volunteer agencies. Within each agency, approximately fifty participants were randomly selected for evaluation. The distribution, statewide use, and impact of resources is being evaluated in 2001.

Comments on the Video Resources

After teaching with the video, WIC educators have said:

- “I liked it. I thought it was a great tool, and it was very practical.”
- “For me, it made clinics easier, because there was more to talk about at nutrition education contacts.”
- “The participants were interested in it.”
- “Participants eagerly came up after [viewing the video] to ask for recipes, even before they knew we had them.”

After viewing the video, WIC participants have said:

- “It’s a great video.”
- “The most helpful part is knowing that you can cook healthy meals in less time.”
- “I saw a lot of recipes that were easy enough for me to make.”
- “The most helpful part of the video is that it shows you that you can have your children help.”

Collaboration

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